

# **Increasing Transformational Influence of Yoga in European Countries: A Study in Various Age Groups**

**Dr Jyoti Joshi**

Business Coach and Trainer, Diakonie Hasenberg, Munich, Germany

**Dr. Rajesh Kumar Phor**

Assistant Professor, Department of Physical Education, S. D. College, Ambala Cantt

## **Abstract**

### **Purpose–**

The study aims to understand the influence of yoga which is internationally coined as yoga in various segments of the European population and to understand the mediating role of yoga to balance work-life conditions.

### **Design/methodology/approach–**

The research collected 100 surveys and employed the variance-based modeling technique for the data analysis.

### **Findings–**

The investigation resulted in a comprehensive framework to recognize a positive influence of yoga activated in day to day life in the various age groups of the European population.

### **Key Audience -**

- Youth
- School going Children
- Aging population (man and woman)

### **Key Words -**

Age groups, European segment, transformational Impact, data study

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**Summary** - This paper proposes the transformational impact of yoga in the European continent in a positive way. The paper uses the methodology of empirical data collection. The questionnaire has been designed and surveyed through the various nationalities, especially keeping in mind the different age groups of men and women. The paper also discusses the yoga principles that espouse how profound changes happen when we develop connectivity to the sufferings of others, realizing that fragility is inherent to all of us.

### **1. Introduction**

It is important to acknowledge that we all experience suffering, discontent, or dissatisfaction. Acceding this predicament is the first step towards understanding the painful experience which is more relevant than ever before in current excruciating times of pandemic that we all are experiencing. With everything that is currently going on in the world, our stress levels may likely be heightened. For some people, the uncertainty of this time causes a lot of anxiety. It's important to realize and practice healthy ways of de-stressing as we learn how to deal with new normal every day. While the world is gasping in bewilderment to save itself from the agonizing waves of Covid -19 which seem rhapsodical, looking back may hand us an enshrined solution in the form of yoga which may equip us to fight this battle.

### **2. Literature background and theoretical underpinning:**

From the ancient scripture to the middle Ages until the very recent studies which are supported by scientific evidence, it is becoming very apparent that yoga is not only the strengthening of the body but also stabilizing the mind and heart through various breathing techniques. It is one form of physical exercise that works in synchronization with the mind and soul. There is ample literature available on yoga not only in India but also across Europe.

### **3. Global inclusiveness of yoga:**

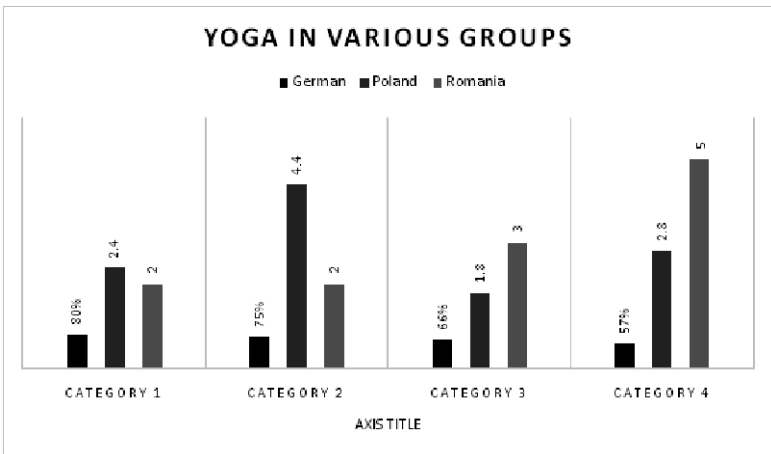
What makes yoga exclusive is, it's being inclusive. People of all age groups, nationalities, and social backgrounds can practice it because yoga is accessible to all. There are so many different kinds of yoga practices, so it's possible for anyone to start. Size and fitness levels don't matter, there are modifications for every yoga pose. Apart from the real

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physical effect of the corona virus on our populations, the mental health implications of the pandemic can be felt just as strongly. For those already suffering from mental health conditions or anxiety, the added stress of a global pandemic can feel overwhelming and unmanageable. Anxiety thrives on uncertainty and being in a constant state of waiting for something to happen will only increase this. Anxiety and the manner in which we breathe are co-joint. The principles of yoga offer a wonderful, logical explanation to regulate stress.

### 4. Data reflection:

The below-given chart reflects the yoga practice trends in various groups of different nationalities in the European continent. This was calculated from the data by comparing the various answers which were based on the questionnaire. This study was carried out in February 2022. Category one reflects the older generation which is older than 75 years. Category second represents the woman segment of the population. the third category reflects the trend in children till 12 years and category 4 represents the youth between 12 to 18 years.



### 5. Principle of breathing in yoga:

Breathing and yoga are oftentimes associated under the same umbrella. While both activities encourage mindfulness, health, and relaxation. Yoga can get intense and serve as a workout depending on the level.

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Breathing, however, is effortless and can be practiced everywhere with being a little mindful. Often, when we are in a stressful situation, we get anxious and do not give our minds a chance to think logically. Breathing rightfully supports our emotional well-being by stamping out the information overload that we all experience daily. It allows us a clean space in our mind which in turn can cast us towards positivity. We not only feel revamped but we also become mindful of people and situations which lead us to a deep consciousness of life -force. Yoga fosters sensitivity and larger understanding, and it is worth observing that sympathy and receptivity lie at the very root of yoga's first principle- helping others by helping oneself. Yoga practice can help us develop a non-impulsive reaction to events. As Krishnamurti states "You can perceive totally, completely only when the mind is wholly quiet. So the professionals, the teachers, the gurus say you must sit in a certain posture, control your thought, breathe properly, and so on. So a contradiction takes place because you are in conflict because you do not know how to control, how to breathe." Do not take your breathing for granted. Taking the time to breathe mindfully and deeply for a few minutes or so can already help you to see an improvement without even moving a muscle. The power of being still is just as important as the power of movement. According to the American Osteopathic Association, the purpose of yoga is to build strength, awareness, and harmony in the mind and body. Yoga allows the body to stretch and utilize muscles that would not typically get used in standard popular practices of workouts or a classic run. But, aside from the physical benefits, yoga also gives the opportunity to focus on your breathing and allows you to manage your stress levels.

The short-term effects of yoga are usually felt through breathing techniques. By learning to breathe deeply, you not only physically allow your muscles to relax, but you are also much better equipped to connect with other relaxation techniques, such as meditation. In the long term, practicing yoga helps to build a mind-body connection that reinforces much control we actually have over both. Anxiety disorders, and by extension, coronavirus anxiety, thrive on feeling out of control and being helpless. Over time, yoga can help you to regain that sense of control and allow your mind and your body to sharpen each other,

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which in turn gives you the tools to better manage those moments when you feel anxious over a situation, you can't control. Sometimes our biggest enemy is our own mind, so give yourself some time to relax your mind and focus on yourself. It is doing more good for your body than you know. This reveals the possible reasons for the increasing popularity of yoga.

### 6. The significance in current scenario:

The world is ripping apart among most smothering of times. The enemy cannot be seen yet it is pervasive. Even under such a pressure, people seem to somehow brace their spirits up and let not the negativity suppress the strength of the venerated spirit. It is one of the rarest of the events that have happened in the history of the human race - the fiasco of corona disease. The human race is clueless about fighting back and defeating this enemy but at the same time, some adamant spirit deep down knows that when the going gets tough, the tough get going. In this scenario of upheaval and storms, one needs to calm down his mind. Some tool, some solution is required to give back the human brain its harmony and power of reflection to find and forge a way ahead. From sports to meditation, from music to fine arts there are several means that could assist the human mind to hold on to its strength which is the need of the hour.



### 7. Different ways through which yoga became popular in west:

One among such various sought-after ways to calm down the mind and heal the body is Yoga. When human courage is trapped with fearfulness

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and anxiety, one needs to hold on to the craft of living. This craft can be realized through a 3000 BCE old magnetic science of "Yoga" whose origin is in India.

Yoga symbolizes "yog" which denotes unity. Yoga seeks the unity of mind and soul. Yoga is mentioned in ancient Indian scientific scriptures such as the Rigveda and the Upanishads as a healing practice. The concept of yoga is very old and was popular among ancient people. It dates back to the 2nd century BC. Yoga is a prevailing practice in the east since its origin. In western countries, it was introduced by a young scholar from India - Swami Vivekananda in the 20th century. Later it got quickly disseminated as a reflexive concept that destresses the body through Asanas and heals the mind through breathing techniques. "Yoga may help bring calm and mindfulness to your busy life."

Considering its magnanimous attributes and increasing positive impact on millions of people, the United Nations General Assembly joined hands together for the inception of The International Day of Yoga which is celebrated annually on 21 June since 2015. The motive behind celebrating the International Day of Yoga is to increase awareness among people for its health benefits. The international day of yoga attains all the more significance in these turbulent times when the corona virus is spreading. Not only it is significant to maintain physical fitness but also it is critical to keep our psychological balance to move ahead with a calm firmness so that social distancing does not turn into social coldness. Yoga has phenomenal virtues to provide both. Its breathing techniques work as a therapy where one understands the true self and connects better within. Many among us were already having a much stressful life and now everyone is facing unprecedented changes in lifestyle due to Covid- 19 virus. With the increasing work-from-home options, the boundaries between the professional and personal space are blurring which is generating a lot of stress among young people. At the same time due to travel restrictions more and more elderly people are feeling the impact of depressing loneliness as their relatives, friends are no more able to visit them. Yoga can very impressively bolster how everyone handles this situation. A half an hour of breathing exercises and the asanas can steer our day in a positive direction. „If you claim

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that you are a yogi, then you should have an undying smile on your face. I would say, that is the sign of a Yogi. Yoga makes your emotions softer and more peaceful, and you blossom in your emotions. It brings freedom to your expression and your thought patterns. These are the real signs of Yoga. It is not just to do with the flexibility of the body. Of course, that too is a part of Yoga. The body becomes flexible, and the mind grows in faith and conviction. If all this happens, know that it is the gift of Yoga, and consider yourself as a Yogi.”

Yoga is getting popular and more and more people are becoming aware of its aesthetic and physical benefits but still there is a lot of scope that Yoga becomes an integral part of their lives. In today's stressful time, yoga must be a daily companion in the journey of our lives. International Day of Yoga is just a reminder that yoga is not a choice, it is a way of life. When we start understanding the principles of yoga, we begin to understand ourselves better and that is the first step to self-healing and self fitness which is the need of the hour.

### 8. Conclusion, limitations, and further scope

This research benefits the various sections of society at the international level. The study reflects how yoga activities have been useful for many age groups of different ethnicity.

The Study invariably has certain limitations. First, the sample size may hinder the generalization of the study. Second, most of the people surveyed and studied were from different countries which may not necessarily voice the community as a whole.

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